

I have a confession to make: I really, TRULY thought this year (2018) would be much easier on us, energetically/astrologically-speaking.

I was wrong. Man, was I wrong.

These past few weeks I have been doing more readings than even I would have thought possible - busy all day at the shop with my mini-readings, but packed up before and after hours with privates and phone readings with people all over the world. It has been amazing. And yeah, a little overwhelming. If there is a "theme" I really think it is quite simple: It all boils down to are you, or are you not, an asshole? Because from what I am seeing and hearing, most people are either behaving badly or reeling from close encounters with others who are behaving badly. And since the people who come into my shop are most certainly NOT the former - they are dealing heavily with the latter.

Why is everyone so uncomfortable? It's all the damn revealing! If I can't trust (insert name here) then who CAN I trust? Lots of skepticism and some panic, as the "blowback" from working within those industries and institutions which are being held up to Saturn's close scrutiny is uncomfortable at best. I've also heard about an extraordinary number of people who went "ghost" ... that is, absolutely disappearing with no warning. I would imagine this is (once again) all about the reveal - true intentions, genuine character - but so very painful to experience.

Last month into now, there's been lots of talk about the effects of Mercury retrograde, but I honestly think most of the anxiety/aggression we've been seeing has more to do with the fact that throughout the second half of March we've had our sun spitting solar flares in our direction (also called CMEs or Coronal Mass Ejections). These have the potential to shut down electronics as well as cause headaches, dizziness, and sleeplessness in people around the world. A good solar storm can increase stroke risk, increase intensity in migraine headaches and cluster headache cycles. Disruptions to sleep cycles have been correlated with solar flares as well. Geomagnetic storms have also been associated with depression, dizziness, confused thinking, and erratic behaviors.

Any time we see amped-up energy and general mayhem, many people make a concerted effort to raise vibrations by clearing themselves and cleansing their home and/or office space. Spring is also a natural time to want to clean up. I do sell a LOT of sage, and most of us know about clearing space - if not, you can hit "reply" to this newsletter and ask me to send my own sage and salt bath cleansing information sheets to you. However, there is another aspect to clearing and cleansing that doesn't get talked about nearly enough and that is Setting Wards (or Warding).

Before I set out to do a thorough, top-to-bottom clearing of a house or office space, I start by taking a cleansing salt bath the night before. Often, I clear using sage, but I've also worked with palo santo, camphor (personal favorite), frankincense, or our own special

"exorcism" incense mix. After clearing the house, I set boundary wards on the property. Wards are protective energy barriers. They keep things out. You can place them around your home: Think of an energy field you raise up and over and below a space, encapsulating it.

If you live on a city lot, you would ward the entire property, following along its property lines. But say your home sits on an acre or more - then you would set your wards maybe 30 feet out from the footprint of the house. Use your judgment, if there are natural markers (boulders, fences, garden beds, etc) incorporate them. I use four railroad spikes (which we sell), black salt, four obsidian stones, and a container of chamber water made from the urine of everyone who lives in the house (sounds weird - yes, but how do most male animals establish their territory?). Remember, you are sending a message here!

I start at the right front corner of the property and work clockwise around the house. I pound in one railroad spike so it sits below the grass in the ground (no one needs to hit that with their lawnmower), set an obsidian on top (again this is below the level of the grass) pull the displaced bit of lawn or earth back over, then pour some of the chamber water on top to "set" that ward. I then move around to the back and the next corner, and as I walk I sprinkle black salt behind me, creating an actual line encircling the home. Set the next three wards and complete the black salt circle around the perimeter. These wards are now set, but you can "freshen" them periodically. You can also set a household ward by the front door - a stone statue, an evil eye symbol, a sigil on the front door - something to physically and energetically send the message "This home is protected" to the outside world. Many of us have dogs who do this work as well - protecting the home and property - and it's nice to cleanse their collars periodically, and maybe affix a small crystal (smokey quartz, black tourmaline, onyx) for protection. Just be careful before using any type of protection oil on the collar, as many animals are very sensitive to the oils and this can prove disastrous.

Whenever I write about a spell or some magickal thing that I do or sell, there is always immediate interest (and sales, thank you all very much!). Our Talisman Tarot IS on the way ... copyright and packaging decisions have taken longer than we thought. And I guess this is a good time to let everyone know that while I have been living above the shop for the past year, China is moving into the second floor apartment (the kids and I are on the 3rd/4th floor) in the next couple of weeks. So she has been busy the past couple months organizing and packing. I know products have been slow to get back up on the shelves (sage water spray in particular) so thank you for your patience - this has been a process, believe me! Once everything has settled down, we are looking forward to expanding our product lines, freshening up the shop inside and out, planning some fun field trips in the community (did you know Derby has the oldest public cemetery in the country? And a very haunted Opera House?) and extending our evening hours on Friday and Saturday. There are some new (and established) pubs and breweries here in downtown Derby, with good

food and live music, and we are noticing that people are parking and walking from place to place. We want to stay open and be part of the fun!

"Do not wait until the conditions are perfect to begin. Beginning makes the conditions perfect."

-- Alan Cohen

**Blessings, Laura**